[180 cont.]

×171 On the other hand, Tikopia shows close agreement and has lively traffic with the islands of the entire chain (6). It is

6. Thilenius, ibid., pp. 57ff.

clear that the Santa Cruz group could not remain untouched by this Polynesian population in its immediate vicinity and swarming around it; as a matter of fact, part of the Reef Islands are colonized by Polynesians. Constant trade relations linked Tikopia with Utupua [181] and Vanikoro, but beyond that also with Ndeni and the Reef Islands; even Sikaiana was occasionally drawn into its orbit (1).

[167] [439]

1. Cf. p. 79.

×171 177 Under these circumstances it is surprising how slight the influence of the more recent Polynesian cultures was on the group. Polynesian life is most marked on Vanikoro, over which Tikopia temporarily exercised a kind of supremacy. Here, the chiefdom in particular in its present form reveals itself as a foreign import, for, as elsewhere in Polynesia, it not only stands far above the common people, but is also remote from all the interests of the individual tribes (2).

[642]

2. Cf. p. 109. Concerning Polynesian influence on Vanikoro, cf. Lesson, in Revue d'Anthropologie, V, pp. 257ff.

×171 The Polynesian cult came in with the chiefs. The spirit houses (balai atua) with their posts of stone or wood, the seats of the spirits, correspond throughout with the hare aiku of Ontong Java, which by their name are characterized as Polynesian cultural items (3). The name Tangaloa (4), which

3. Parkinson, I.A.f.E., X, p. 115. Thilenius, p. 61.

/155 cont./

villages are found. In the interior the population is very sparse, large villages seem to be absent there, and probably only kin groups or families that for some reason have become isolated live there (2).

2. [Cf. Ethn., I, p. 98. See also Coombe, pp. 186 f.]

In Utupua the population has dropped to 300 souls, and still lower in the once populous Vanikoro, whereas it is said that the preservation of the race has been better on the Reef Islands.

The reasons for the depopulation seem to be the same here as everywhere in the South Seas: the recruiting of workers and imported epidemics, as well as general demoralization as a result of contact with Whites, even though only casual here. Today alcohol is no longer imported into Nitendi. Plantation work is carried on in the Solomons, and even though the treatment of the workers there is strictly supervised by the British government, sicknesses cannot be kept at a distance from the Blacks, and they are then spread when the worker returns to his homeland. It is chiefly a matter of respiratory diseases, which are undoubtedly the most dangerous enemy of the natives. It may be said that every recruit ship brings new infections to the island, even though everyone on board seems to be healthy, infections which in a few days develop into dangerous cold and influenza epidemics, to which the old, the children, and the weak fall victim.

Aside from such imported diseases, the race seems to be healthy. I did not come across leprosy and elephantiasis, /156/ and fertility seems to be satisfactory. A woman seldom raises more than three children, however, and that alone would be sufficient to explain the population decline. The reasons for this may be frequent abortion, which again may rest on the general demoralization. This is an inevitable result of contact between a race of lower culture and Whites.

/156 cont./

Today, besides Mr. Matthews, only one missionary of the Melanesian Mission periodically lives on Nitendi, and colonization by Whites has never been very great. Thus there is little direct contact between Whites and natives on the island itself.

The inhabitants of Nitendi do not enjoy a very good reputation and are regarded as war-like and aggressive, probably not entirely unjustly, for Mendaña himself, the discoverer of the island, was greeted with a hail of arrows, even before he landed. This was the customary welcome accorded almost every stranger in Melanesia, however, and if elsewhere strangers were first induced to land then attacked, this in itself shows the more candid and more courageous character of the Nitendi men. And in fact, they seem candid and not very crafty, at least in comparison with the inhabitants of the New Hebrides. Now that they have become accustomed to generally peaceful intercourse with Whites as a result of missions and recruitment, they are, in contrast to other Melanesians, gay, trustful, and obliging, even in front of Whites. Only a slight infraction of their etiquette, however, arouses spontaneous enmity. Then they reach for the bow and arrow, but their anger quickly subsides, especially if they do not have the advantage, and a payment will usually atone for the crime. Often it seems as though they fight only to satisfy their laws. The beginnings of gratitude are there.

A sense for the comic is strongly developed. There is great fondness for ridicule, and their wit seems to be keen and to the point. A man's weak side is grasped in a moment and forever afterward it is laughed at and ridiculed. They have no compassion. Other people's suffering leaves them cold or amuses them, whereas their own pain is very strongly felt, not so much chronic suffering as acute injury.

Animals are tortured out of carelessness, but domestic animals are well cared for. Children are treated tenderly (1),

1. [Probably everywhere the smaller children are carried by the mother on the left hip in the bark-cloth shawl,

Ūta Village cont.

X162

No. 3

A. Tūplo (29) [-bū]

Fa--Malingē (d) of Bania

Mo--Laegē (d) of Neba

Si--Ivea (19) single

Br--Menulūa (16) single

Si--Iati, married at Munaū-Menau No. 6

Br--Nūme of Ūta No. 1 (diff. Mo)

B. Iteiti (24) [-bebla]

Fa--Lumno of Munaū-Menau No. 1

Mo--Itūpe " " "

Sibs--see Munaū-Menau No. 1

C. So--Netola (5)

So--Nume (2)

D. HuSi--Ivea (19)

HuBr--Menulua (16)

Hu Class. Br--Malingē (24)

Fa--Lematede (d) of Ūta

Mo--Imatu (d) of Ūta

Hu Class. BrWi--Itabu (19)

Fa--Kaiputu (d) of Malo

Mo--Inapu of Noka No. 8

No. 4

A. Meibū (61)

Fa--Memubu (d) of Maibu-Taipe

Mo--Inaonūē (d) of Noū

●[167] Always single, away from island about 40 years.